

## White Support Canes and White Identification (Id) Canes

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A white support cane is an effective tool for people who have balance issues, diminished strength, or other physical conditions that affect their stability. A white support cane features a white shaft with a red section at the bottom. It can have a T-shaped handle, a curved handle, or an offset handle. The tip of the white support cane is rubber, which helps grip the floor and can be easily replaced when it wears out. White support canes are available in folding and non-folding styles as well as adjustable-length and fixed-length models.

Unlike standard white canes and white ID canes, white support canes are weight-bearing canes. They need to be strong enough so individuals can lean on them for stability and support when walking or standing. The white and red colors of the cane let others know that the person using the white support cane is blind or visually impaired. It is important to note that *white support canes provide limited protection from obstacles and drop-offs in a person's travel path*. Therefore, people who use a white support cane should slow down their walking pace and move cautiously. They might need to be accompanied by a responsible adult to ensure their safety. They might also need to walk with a guide, holding the guide's arm with a support grip and using the white support cane with their other hand. For information on Guide Techniques, visit the KY Office for Vocational Rehabilitation's website and go to the section titled Orientation and Mobility Resources.

For individuals who need maximum protection from obstacles and drop-offs as well as extra stability, it is sometimes possible for a person to learn to use both a white support cane and a standard white cane at the same time. An Orientation & Mobility Specialist is the best person to make that determination and to provide the proper training.



Folding White Support Cane with a T-shaped Handle



Non-folding White Support Cane with a Curved Handle. Threads at the bottom allow it to be adjusted a few inches up or down in length.

## White Identification Canes

A white identification cane, often called a white ID cane, does exactly what its name suggests—it identifies the person holding it as having impaired vision. A white ID cane is much thinner and more lightweight than a standard white cane. It may be all white from top to bottom, or it may have a red section near the bottom. White ID canes do not have a specially designed grip or cane tip. They are readily available as folding canes. White ID canes should be held in a vertical position with the tip off the ground; they should *not* be swept back and forth across the ground in front of the person while walking.

White ID canes are only for intermittent, occasional use by people with low vision. They are beneficial in certain situations, such as when a person with low vision is maneuvering through a large crowd, crossing a parking lot at dusk, or entering a darkened auditorium. The white identification cane helps make the person with low vision stand out, especially to motorists, bicyclists, and bystanders who would not realize otherwise that the person can't see them well. *White ID canes are not a substitute for a standard white cane.* White ID canes do not provide protection from obstacles in the traveler's path, from drop-offs, from curbs and stairs, or other tripping hazards. White ID canes should *never* be used in place of a standard white cane if an O&M Specialist has recommended a standard white cane for a consumer.

Although no specific training is required for a person with low vision to use a white ID cane, it is still a good idea to consult with a certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist to learn more about the pros and cons of white ID canes.



Folding White ID Cane.  
Note the absence of a  
special grip and cane tip.